

# ELECTIONS POLICY

Elections



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**EFFECTIVE:** January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014

**AMENDED:** June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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**AUTHORITY:** General Membership

**RATIFIED BY:** General Membership

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**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- Election Rules
  - Electoral Oversight Policy
  - Electoral Oversight procedure
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*This policy outlines the official rules and processes for elections held by the Society. This policy aims to provide a fair election procedure for the student members of the Society to elect the directors of SUS.*

## Part 1: Election Structure

### 1. Schedule of Elections

- 1.1. The planning period takes place from the date when the Board calls for the election until the nomination period.
- 1.2. The nomination period takes place for a minimum of fifteen (15) business days.
- 1.3. The review period takes place for a minimum of five (5) business days after the close of nominations.
- 1.4. The campaign period takes place for a minimum of ten (10) business days after the review period.
- 1.5. The voting period takes place over a minimum of three to four (3-4) business days after the campaign period.
- 1.6. Ratification of the elections should occur as soon as reasonably possible after the end of the voting period.
- 1.7. All elections dates must be set and made public by the Electoral Officer prior to the commencement of the nomination period
  - 1.7.1. Should extenuating circumstances arise where maintaining the initially set schedule is to the detriment of students, the Electoral Officer may extend periods, with the approval of the SUS President
    - 1.7.1.1. Any alterations to the Election Schedule must be announced on all active and official SUS social media and posted on the SUS website
- 1.8. The transition period lasts for the last two (2) weeks of April.

### 2. Planning Period

- 2.1. The Electoral Officer is responsible for the planning of elections, though SUS is required to provide non-partisan support whenever requested by the CEO.

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2.2. During the planning period, promotional materials must be created, and distributed.

2.2.1. Promotional materials must be neutral and work to reach the widest possible audience. Potential materials include but are not limited to: posters, social media updates, UFV Career Centre, student-wide emails, newspaper, and radio.

2.2.2. The specific dates for each election period must be set by the end of the planning period, along with dates for all candidate meetings and any other mandatory election event.

2.3. The nomination package must be prepared, and must include:

2.3.1. A candidate's contact information, including student number;

2.3.2. A complete timeline of the election;

2.3.3. An "Elections Eligibility Waiver" form, which shall indicate that the Member in question has shown, to the best of their ability that they are eligible to stand for election to their desired role, and that the Chief Electoral Officer is permitted to receive confirmation from UFV of any necessary eligibility information;

2.3.4. A "Declaration of Intent" form, which shall confirm the candidate's commitment to fulfil their desired role for the entire duration of the specified term;

2.3.5. An "Electoral Candidate Contract" which shall confirm that the candidate has read all relevant election rules and agrees to abide to the rules and decisions of the Chief Electoral Officer.

2.3.6. A "Candidate Statement" form, where the candidate shall be permitted to provide a statement on their views on matters rightfully falling under the jurisdiction of their desired position, and either;

2.3.6.1. A Faculty member's signature stating their recommendation of the student to run in the election, and one signature from the candidate's peers, or

2.3.6.2. Five (5) signatures from the candidate's peers.

### 3. Nomination Period

3.1. The nomination package must be available online for the first business day of the nomination period.

3.2. Nomination packages must be submitted to the Electoral Officer by the last day of the nomination period, in accordance with the submission terms stated on the nomination package.

3.2.1. Election packages submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

3.3. Candidates cannot be nominated as slates or parties.

### 4. Review period

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- 4.1. The Electoral Officer shall have one week to review all nomination packages and confirm the eligibility of each candidate.
- 4.2. When all candidate verification is complete, the Electoral Officer will inform each candidate of their eligibility.
- 4.3. The names and statements of all eligible candidates must be posted on the SUS website, ordered within each position by surname, when directed by the Electoral Officer. The posting must occur by the first day of the campaign period.
  - 4.3.1. Candidates are not able to change the candidate statement after the review period, though are permitted to add additional documents if approved by the Electoral Officer.
- 4.4. A mandatory information meeting should be held during the review period to brief all candidates on election rules and procedures.

## 5. Campaign and Voting Periods

- 5.1. All campaign materials must not contain defaming or inflammatory images or text, and must strictly adhere to all relevant laws regarding public speech and policies of the University.
  - 5.1.1. What material qualifies as defaming or inflammatory is at the discretion of the EO.
- 5.2. All foodstuffs, consumable liquids, and edible objects are strictly forbidden to be used as campaign materials.
- 5.3. All campaign materials must not impede the regular operation of the University or SUS.
- 5.4. All campaign materials must not display the SUS or UFV logos in full or in part, or any SUS or UFV promotional materials. This does not prevent the Electoral Officer from requiring specific text or graphics on the materials of all candidates for the purposes of promoting the election.
- 5.5. Any social media accounts, pages, or other online material created for promotion of a campaign must be officially declared to and approved by the Electoral Officer.
- 5.6. During campaign and voting period, the following members must remain neutral on all social media outlets, personal conversations, and any other form of communication, and may only post general information about the election to encourage participation:
  - 5.6.1. The Electoral Officer and the Electoral Committee.
  - 5.6.2. All members of the board not currently standing for election.
  - 5.6.3. All individuals claiming to or appearing to represent SUS.
- 5.7. All materials and interactions made by candidates on social media and other online mediums must adhere to the rules previously stated for all other campaign materials.

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- 5.8. If at any time, a student communicates interest in being removed from a candidate's social media network, the candidate must respect the student's wishes.
- 5.9. The Electoral Officer will use an appropriate digital platform for collecting votes.
- 5.10. Mobile voting stations may only be set up on the direction of the Electoral Officer.
- 5.11. Ballots shall be only available for voting during the voting period.
  - 5.11.1. Inspection of the ballots by persons other than the Electoral Officer or relevant third parties, as determined by the Electoral Officer, is forbidden.
- 5.12. The Ballots shall be formatted by the Electoral Officer in accordance to the Election Oversight Policy.
- 5.13. The Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for counting the ballots as per the Electoral Oversight Policy.

## 6. Ratification

- 6.1. Ratification of an Election must occur before the elected Candidates take office.
- 6.2. Ratification must only occur after the presentation of the report of the Electoral Officer is made to the Board.
- 6.3. Elections must be ratified by the Board of the Student Union Society if the elections are declared free and fair by the Electoral Officer.
- 6.4. The Board may choose not to ratify a specific position only if there is an ongoing appeal or runoff vote regarding that position.

## 7. Ties in Elections

- 7.1. In the event of a tie, the Electoral Officer will hold a runoff vote only for the candidates deemed to be in a tie by the Electoral Officer.
- 7.2. The runoff for the tied candidates will be run in accordance with the Elections Policy, excluding the time frame.
- 7.3. These candidates will have one (1) week for campaigning, followed by three (3) business days of voting.

## 8. Transition Period

- 8.1. After the election is completed, the new incumbents are orientated to the Society in accordance with relevant transition policies and procedures.

## 9. By-elections

- 9.1. The SUS Board must call a by-election if it has less than three (3) elected members of the Board.
- 9.2. The SUS Board may choose to call a by-election any time, in accordance with the policies and bylaws of SUS, if there are any vacant elected positions of the Board.
  - 9.2.1. No period of a by-election may happen during any period of a regular election

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- 9.3. A by-election must contain all of the same election periods as a regular election excluding the planning and transition periods.
- 9.3.1. The nomination period takes place for a minimum of ten (10) business days, with the start date determined by the Board.
- 9.3.2. The review period takes place for a minimum of two (2) business days after the close of nominations.
- 9.3.3. The campaign period takes place for a minimum of five (5) business days after the review period.
- 9.3.4. The voting period takes place over a minimum of three-to-four (3-4) business days after the campaign period.
- 9.3.5. Ratification of the elections should occur as soon as reasonably possible after the end of the voting period.